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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION FROM
FOREIGN DOCUMENTS OR RADIO BROADCASTS

REPORT

CD NO.

50X1-HUM

COUNTRY USSR

SUBJECT Scientific.- Medicine, tumors

DATE OF INFORMATION 1950

HOW PUBLISHED Weekly newspaper

DATE DIST. 14 Nov 1950

WHERE PUBLISHED Moscow

NO. OF PAGES 2

DATE
PUBLISHED 12 Oct 1950

LANGUAGE Russian

SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

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SOURCE Meditinskiy Rabotnik.

LISTS DISCOVERIES CREDITED TO RUSSIAN ONCOLOGY

Prof M. Nevyadomskiy

[Digest]

Russian scientists have, since the middle of the last century, defended original and entirely contemporary views in the field of oncology, and must be given due credit both for developing this branch of science on a materialistic basis and for combating the reactionary theories of Virchow and Cohnheim. M. M. Rudnev, M. A. Novinskiy, A. Vysokovich, and S. M. Voronin have created the parasitic theory of tumors, and V. V. Podvysotskiy for the first time postulated that malignant tumors are produced by viruses. As opposed to idealistic theories, which are based exclusively on speculative assumptions and which explained malignization in a vitalistic manner (transition of cells into a wild state, loss of altruism by cells and acquisition of egotism, violence and anarchy of growth), the Russian school of oncology dealt with problems connected with the genesis of tumors on the basis of experimental data. To the Russian school of oncology also belongs the credit for first developing and applying chemotherapeutic methods of treating tumors, particularly skin cancer.

Progressive views quite generally held by Russian oncologists at about the time of World War I on the existence of a living causative factor of tumors have met with energetic opposition both abroad and at home. This is reflected in N. N. Petrov's manual of oncology (1910 - 1926), which treats the genesis of tumors from Virchow's viewpoint and does not mention at all the original discoveries made by Russian oncologists. Unfortunately, Petrov has not changed his views even now, and since 1948 has become an adherent of Hertwig's idealistic theory, which assumes that a new race of cells comes into existence as a result of irritation. The author of this article published in 1928 the first experimental investigations proving that tumors are caused by viruses and demonstrating that tumors can be transmitted by noncellular filtrates of tumors rather than through transplantation of cells.

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Subsequent experiments on the transportation of cancer by the blood of mice and likewise by ultrafiltrates of cancer (with the filtration carried out through colloidal dialysis? bags) and of sarcoma of rats and mice (185 filtered tumors per 314 experiments) enabled us in 1934 to advance a theory of the formation of malignant tumor cells from the elementary particles of a specific parasite which has virus stages. Prof F. M. Brinker (1935), A. A. Bogomolets (1937), and later on, N. F. Gamaleya, recognized the significance of our work on filtrates. In 1935, tumors were classified as virus diseases by the decision of a special meeting held at the Academy of Sciences USSR.

It is well known that nobody has yet succeeded in transforming normal cells into tumor cells in a tissue culture either by means of a cancerogenic substance or a virus, nor has anyone observed the malignization of cells around the periphery of a growing tumor. On the other hand, experimental oncology has accumulated plentiful data showing that elementary particles of the virus-parasite constitute the etiological factor of tumors. These elementary particles were discovered by us in cell-free filtrates and ultrafiltrates of tumors as early as 1933, and similar results were also obtained by Pashen and Malomos. The elementary particles forming the causative factor of certain tumors could be propagated in cultures [cultivated in artificial media?].

It has been shown in a number of investigations that tumors can be transmitted by parasitic worms, insects, and apparently also rodents, while contagion as a result of direct contact with a patient does not arise.

In 1946, Prof M. A. Morozov established the presence of elementary particles of the causative factor in rabbit fibroma, and in 1949 in breast cancer of mice belonging to cancer-susceptible strains.

In present, the elementary particles of rabbit myxoma, of human lymphogranuloma inguinale, and of rat sarcoma have been cultivated. Experiments carried out by M. K. Ebert, M. F. Runova, and L. A. Zil'ber confirmed the existence of antibodies against the tumor virus in the blood of diseased animals. M. F. Runova and I have proven the presence of a toxin in recent cancerous tumors of rats. As N. F. Gamaleya had already stated in his Medical Microbiology in 1943, the virus origin of tumors has been definitely proven.

The Russian school of oncology, which was founded by M. M. Rudnev in 1870, has made a very valuable contribution to world science.

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